

"IN THE HEIGHTS"



RICHARD WATSON GILDER

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“IN THE HEIGHTS”

By R. W. Gilder.



THE NEW DAY
THE CELESTIAL PASSION
LYRICS
TWO WORLDS
THE GREAT REMEMBRANCE

THE ABOVE ALSO IN ONE VOLUME ENTITLED

FIVE BOOKS OF SONG
IN PALESTINE AND OTHER POEMS
POEMS AND INSCRIPTIONS
"IN THE HEIGHTS"

ALSO SELECTIONS ENTITLED

FOR THE COUNTRY
A CHRISTMAS WREATH



"IN THE HEIGHTS"

BY

RICHARD WATSON GILDER



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CONTENTS

	PAGE
"IN THE HEIGHTS" (John R. Procter)	3
HOME ACRES	7
A CALL TO THE MOUNTAINS	9
SPRING SURPRISE	12
AUTUMN TREES	13
"THE LIGHT LIES ON THE FARTHER HILLS"	14
"AH, NEAR, DEAR FRIEND"	16
MUSIC IN DARKNESS (Adele aus der Ohe)	18
THE ANGER OF BEETHOVEN	21
MOTHER AND CHILD	22
ALICE FREEMAN PALMER	23
"MOTHER OF HEROES" (Sarah Blake Shaw)	24
THE GREAT CITIZEN (Abram Stevens Hewitt)	25
ON READING OF A POET'S DEATH (Carlyle McKinley)	27
JOHN HENRY BONER	28
"A WONDROUS SONG"	29
A NEW POET	30

	PAGE
THE SINGER OF JOY	33
BREAD UPON THE WATERS	34
LOST	36
"WHAT MAN HATH DONE"	37
"HE PONDERED WELL"	39
"THOU THINKEST THOU HAST LIVED"	40
THE GOOD MAN	42
"SO FIERCE THE BUFFETS"	43
TWO HEROES	44
THE WORLD'S END	46
SHELLEY'S "OZYMANDIAS"	47
LA SALLE (Explorer of the Mississippi)	48
INAUGURATION DAY	49
THE WASHINGTON MONUMENT (At Washington, D. C.)	52
BUILDERS OF THE STATE	53
IMPROMPTUS:	
TO WILLIAM WATSON (On his Coronation Ode)	56
"LIFE IS THE HAMMER" (Sidney Lanier)	56
"THE CRITIC SCANNED THE POET'S BOOK"	57
"HER DELICATE FORM"	57
FRANCESCA MIA	58
AGE, AND THE SCORNER	58
TO JACOB A. RHIS (On his Silver Wedding)	59
MUSIC AND FRIENDSHIP	60

CONTENTS

vii

	PAGE
FRIENDSHIP (To —)	60
TO E. C. S. (On his Seventieth Birthday)	61
"TELL ME GOOD-BY"	61
FAREWELL TO CHARLESTON	62
"THE PINES"	63
"NOT WREATHS ALONE"	64
FOR THE CITY CLUB	65
TO CHARLES H. RUSSELL (Whose Father was One of Lincoln's Helpers)	65
"GIVE THY DAY TO DUTY"	66
TWO OPTIMISTS (A Letter to Joseph Jefferson, Ac- knowledging a Copy of Helen Keller's Essay on "Optimism")	66
THE PASSING OF JOSEPH JEFFERSON	69
"SHALL WE NOT PRAISE THE LIVING?"	72
HYMN (Written for the Service in Memory of Dr. J. L. M. Curry, held by the Southern Education Conference, Richmond, Virginia, April 26, 1903)	77
JOHN WESLEY (Written for the Celebration of the Two- Hundredth Anniversary of the Birth of John Wesley, at Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, June, 1903)	79
A TEMPLE OF ART (Written for the Opening of the Albright Art Gallery, Buffalo, May 31, 1905)	86
THE WHITE TSAR'S PEOPLE (Reprinted, with additional stanzas)	91

“IN THE HEIGHTS”

“IN THE HEIGHTS”

I

ONE who this valley passionately loved
No more these slopes shall climb, nor hear
these streams
That like the murmured melody of dreams
His happy spirit moved.

II

He knew the sudden and mysterious thrill
That takes the heart of man on mountain
heights,
These autumn days that flame from hill to hill,
These deep and starry nights.

III

O vanished spirit! tell us, if so may be,
Are our wild longings, stirred by scenes like
this,—
Our deep-breathed, shadowless felicity,—
A mocking, empty bliss?

IV

No answering word, save from the inmost soul
That cries: all things are real—beauty, youth;
All the heart feels; of sorrow and joy the whole;
That which but seems is truth.

V

This mortal frame, that harbors the immortal,
Mechanic though it be, in our life's fires
Turns spiritual; it becomes the portal
Wherethrough the soul aspires.

VI

The soul's existence in its human sheath
Is life no more than is the spirit's life
In this wide nature whose keen air we breathe;
Whose strife arms us to strife.

VII

And they are wise who seek not to destroy
The unreasoned happiness of the outpoured
year.
To him,—the lost,—this vale brought no false
joy,
And therefore is most dear.

VIII

Wherever in the majesty of space,
Near or afar, but not from God afar,
Where'er his spirit soars, whatever grace
Is his, whatever star—

IX

The aspirations and imaginings
That in these glorious paths his soul sub-
limed,
They are a part of him; they are the wings
Whereby he strove and climbed.

X

Nature to man not alien doth endure;
Her spirit in his spirit is transfused;
On this high mystery dream the humble-pure,
The mightiest poets mused.

XI

The white clouds billow down the blowing sky,
Then, O my heart, be lifted up, rejoice!
The trumpet of the winds, to that wild voice
Let all my soul reply!

HOME ACRES

I

A SENSE of pureness in the air,
Of wholesome life in growing things ;
Waving of blossom, blade, and wings;
Perfume and beauty everywhere;
Sky, trees, the grass, the very loam—
I love them all; this is our home.

II

God! make me worthy of thy land
Which mine I call a little while;
This meadow where the sunset's smile
Falls like a blessing from thy hand,
And where the river singing runs
'Neath wintry skies and summer suns!

III

Million on million years have sped
To frame green fields and bowering hills:
The mortal for a moment tills
His span of earth, then is he dead:
This knows he well, yet doth he hold
His paradise like miser's gold.

IV

I would be nobler than to clutch
My little world with gloating grasp;
Now, while I live, my hands unclasp,
Or let me hold it not so much
For my own joy as for the good
Of all the gentle brotherhood.

V

And as the seasons move in mirth
Of bloom and bird, of snow and leaf,
May my calm spirit rise from grief,
In solace of the lovely earth;
And though the land be dark or lit,
Oh, let me gather songs from it.

A CALL TO THE MOUNTAINS

I

I CALLED you once to the sea,
Come now to the mountains;
Climb the earth's ramparts with me,
Drink her deep fountains!

II

On the food that you love make merry;
Forget grind and grief
In the red and the tang of the berry,
The bronze of the leaf.

III

Chestnuts are ripe on the bough,
And the burrs all are bursting;
For a tramp with you, John, I vow!
I am hungering and thirsting.

IV

Come, John, or you 'll be to blame;
The birds wait your bidding.
One of them, hearing your name,
Flashed forth from its hiding;—

V

See, it is searching for you—
Its pretty head cocking;
Pecking, and looking askew,
On the bare bough rocking.

VI

And yonder a stray wing flitters;
A great hawk soars;
The lakelet gleams and glitters;
The high wind roars.

VII

Nearer, from field and thicket,
Come musical calls;
The tinkling, clear note of the cricket,
Chime of ripples and falls.

VIII

From the meadow far up to the height
The leaves all are turning;
By the time you have come to the sight
The world will be blazing and burning.

IX

John of Birds, tarry not till
The first wild snow-flurry;
Voices of forest and hill
Cry hurry, and hurry!

SPRING SURPRISE

Lo, now it comes once more; lo, my heart leaps
again,
Comes swift the dear surprise, not at the
spring, alone,
But, as a soul that knew, many a year ago,
All the full bloom of love, since the gray
ashes,—
Feels all the glad surprise when the o'er-
wearied heart
Still knows the joy of life, as in the olden days;
That love can thrill again;—so the spring calls
once more
With the old tenderness; till my heart trem-
bles.

AUTUMN TREES

I

BUT yesterday a world of haze,
To-day, a glory of color and light!
Like golden voices shouting praise
The bright trees flame along the height.

II

Who would have thought, the summer
through,
Each separate tree of all the choir,
Lifting its green against the blue,
Held at its heart such flame and fire?

“THE LIGHT LIES ON THE FARTHER HILLS”

I

THE clouds upon the mountains rest;
A gloom is on the autumn day;
But down the valley, in the west,
The hidden sunlight breaks its way,—
A light lies on the farther hills.

II

Forget thy sorrow, heart of mine!
Though shadows fall and fades the leaf,
Somewhere is joy, though 't is not thine;
The power that sent can heal thy grief;
And light lies on the farther hills.

III

Thou wouldst not with the world be one
If ne'er thou knewest hurt and wrong;
Take comfort, though the darkened sun
Never again bring gleam or song,—
The light lies on the farther hills.

•

“AH, NEAR, DEAR FRIEND”

I

AH, near, dear friend of many and many
years!

I have known thy lovelinesses,—known thy
tears,

Thy smiles, like sunlight crossing shade,
Thy spirit unafraid.

II

All these have been like music to my soul;
These, having fashioned me, should I extol,
It were, in sooth, myself to praise—
O Light of all my days!

III

Thy smiles, thy tears, thy exquisite sad
words,—

Mystic as, in the moonlight, songs of birds,—
But, oh, more wonderful than these,
Thy lonely silences.

MUSIC IN DARKNESS

I

AT the dim end of day
I heard the great musician play:
Saw her white hands now slow, now swiftly pass;
Where gleamed the polished wood, as in a glass,
The shadow hands repeating every motion.
Then did I voyage forth on music's ocean,
Visiting many a sad or joyful shore,
Where storming breakers roar,
Or singing birds made music so intense,—
So intimate of happiness or sorrow,—
I scarce could courage borrow
To hear those strains: well-nigh I hurried thence
To escape the intolerable weight
That on my spirit fell when sobbed the music:
late, too late, too late,

While slow withdrew the light
And, on the lyric tide, came in the night.

II

So grew the dark, enshrouding all the room
In a melodious gloom,
Her face growing viewless; line by line
That swaying form did momentarily decline
And was in darkness lost.
Then white hands ghostly turned, though still
they tost
From tone to tone; pauseless and sure as if in
perfect light;
With blind, instinctive, most miraculous sight,
On, on they sounded in that world of night.

III

Ah, dearest one; was this thy thought, as mine,
As still the music stayed?
“So shall the loved ones fade,—
Feature by feature, line on lovely line;
For all our love, alas,
From twilight into darkness shall they pass!

We in that dark shall see them never more,
But from our spirits they shall not be ban-
ished,—

For on and on shall the sweet music pour
That was the soul of them, the loved, the van-
ished;

And we, who listen, shall not lose them quite
In that mysterious night.”

THE ANGER OF BEETHOVEN

THIS night the enchanting musicians rendered
a trio of Beethoven,—

Light and lovely, or solemn, as in a Tuscan
tower

The walls with gracious tapestries gleam, and
the deep-cut windows

Give on landscapes gigantic, framing the four-
square world,—

When sudden the music turned to anger, as
nature's murmur

Sometimes to anger turns, speaking, in voice
infuriate,

Cruel, quick, implacable; inhuman, savage, re-
sistless,—

And I thought of that sensitive spirit flinging
back in scorn tempestuous

And in art supreme, immortal, the infamous
arrows of fortune.

MOTHER AND CHILD

MOTHER and Child! There is no holier sight
In all the realms of morning and of night;
And all the meaning of that word, DIVINE,
Shines in the tender glory of this sign.

The world learns Worship here; it kneels in
awe,

Seeing a mystery, knowing a mighty law.
Sin cannot live in presence of this grace,
No least unworthiness perplex the place.

Here Good doth dwell, but never baneful
Doubt,

For Love and Loveliness would cast it out.
Were prophet voices still, the heavens brass,
Here would a new Evangel come to pass;
Out from the dark a rose-leaf hand would leap,
Close to the Eternal Throne the ancient world
to keep.

ALICE FREEMAN PALMER

WHEN fell, to-day, the word that she had gone,
Not this my thought: Here a bright journey
ends,

Here rests a soul unresting; here, at last,
Here ends that earnest strength, that gener-
ous life—

For all her life was giving. Rather this
I said (after the first swift, sorrowing pang):
Hence, on a new quest, starts an eager spirit—
No dread, no doubt, unhesitating forth
With asking eyes; pure as the bodiless souls
Whom poets vision near the central throne
Angelically ministrant to man;
So fares she forth with smiling, Godward face;
Nor should we grieve, but give eternal thanks—
Save that we mortal are, and needs must
mourn.

“MOTHER OF HEROES”

SARAH BLAKE SHAW

MOTHER of heroes, she,—of them who gave
Their lives to lift the lowly, free the slave.
Her, through long years, two master passions
 bound:
Love of our free land; and of all sweet sound.
'T was praising her to praise this land of grace;
And when I think on music—lo, her face!

THE GREAT CITIZEN

ABRAM STEVENS HEWITT

I

MOURN for his death, but for his life rejoice,
Who was the city's heart, the city's voice.

II

Dauntless in youth, impetuous in age,
Weighty in speech, in civic counsel sage;

III

Talents and wealth to him were but a trust
To lift his hapless brother from the dust,—

IV

This his chief aim: to wake, in every man,
The soul to do what only courage can.

V

He saw the evil, as the wise must see,
But firm his faith in what the world shall be.

VI

Following the truth, he led his fellow-men,—
Through years and virtues the great citizen!

VII

By being great, he made the city great,—
Serving the city, he upheld the state.

VIII

So shall the city win a purer fame
Led by the living splendor of his name.

ON READING OF A POET'S DEATH

I

I READ that, in his sleep, the poet died
 Ere the day broke;
In a new dawn, as rose earth's crimson tide,
 His spirit woke.

II

Yet still with us his golden spirit stayed:
 On the same page
That told his end, his living verse I read,—
 His lyric rage.

III

Behold! I thought, they call him cold in death,
 But hither turn,—
See where his soul, a glorious, flaming breath,
 Doth pulse and burn!

IV

This is the poet's triumph, his high doom!
After life's stress,
For him the silent, dark, o'er-shadowing tomb
Is shadowless.

V

And this the miracle, the mystery:
In that he gives
His soul away, magnificently free—
By this he lives.

JOHN HENRY BONER

IN life's hard fight this poet did his part;
He was a hero of the mind and heart.
Now rests his body 'neath his own loved skies,
And from his tomb Courage! his spirit cries.

“A WONDROUS SONG”

A WONDROUS song,
Rank with sea smells and the keen lust of life;
Echoing with battle trumpets, and the moan
Of dying men in reeking hospitals;
Thrilling all through with human pity and love
And crying courage in the face of doom;—
With all its love of life still praising death
Enchantingly, as death was never praised;
And with high anger and a god-like scorn
Passionately proclaiming life in death
And the unquenched, immortal soul of man,—
A wondrous song,
Trembling with unshed tears and life's full joy,
Burst the tense meshes of the critic's web
And sang itself into eternal day.

A NEW POET

I

FRIENDS, beware!
Stop babbling! Hark, a sound is in the air!
Above the pretty songs of schools
(Not of music made, but rules),
Above the panic rush for gold
And emptinesses manifold,
And selling of the soul for phantom fame,
And reek of praises where there should be
 blame;

Over the dust and muck,
The buzz and roar of wheels,
Another music steals,—
A right, true note is struck.

II

Friends, beware!
A sound of singing in the air!
The love-song of a man who loves his fellow-
men;
Mother-love and country-love, and the love of
sea and fen;
Lovely thoughts and mighty thoughts and
thoughts that linger long;
There has come to the old world's singing the
thrill of a brave new song.

III

They said there were no more singers,
But listen!—a master voice!
A voice of the true joy-bringers!
Now will ye heed and rejoice
Or pass on the other side,
And wait till the singer has died,

Then weep o'er his voiceless clay?

Friends, beware!

A keen, new sound is in the air,—

Know ye a poet's coming is the old world's
judgment day!

THE SINGER OF JOY

HE sang the rose, he praised its fragrant
breath;
(Alas, he saw the gnawing worm beneath.)
He sang of summer and the flowing grass;
(He knew that all the beauty quick would pass.)
He said the world was good and skies were fair;
(He saw far, gathering clouds, and days of care.)
Immortally he sang pure friendship's flame;
(Yet had he seen it shrivel to a name.)
And, ah, he praised true love, with golden
speech;
(What though it was a star he could not reach.)
His songs in every soul the hero woke;
(He in the shadows waited the last stroke.)
He was the singer of the joyous art;
(Down to the grave he bore a broken heart.)

BREAD UPON THE WATERS

A MELANCHOLY, life o'er-wearied man
Sat in his lonely room, and, with slow breath,
Counted his losses: thrice-wrecked plan on
 plan,
Failure of friend, and hope, and heart, and
 faith—
This last the deadliest, and holding all.
Help was there none through weeping, for the
 years
Had stolen all his treasury of tears.
Then on a page where his eyes chanced to fall
There sprang such words of courage that they
 seemed
Cries on a battle-field, or as one dreamed
Of trumpets sounding charges; on he read
With fixèd gaze, and sad, down-drooping head,

And curious, half-remembering, musing mind.
The ringing of that voice had something
 stirred

In his deep heart, like music long since heard.
“Brave words,” he sighed; and looked where
 they were signed;
There, reading his own name, tears made him
 blind.

LOST

AN old, blind poet, sitting sad and lone,
Thinking his scribe was near, chimed slowly
forth

Into the empty and unheeding air
A song, of all his songs the loveliest.
That night he died, and the sweet song was
lost.

A million roses and uncounted worlds
Unknown, save to their Maker, strew the flood
Of endless and immeasurable time.

“WHAT MAN HATH DONE”

THUS did he speak, thus was he comforted:
“I yet shall learn to live ere I am dead;
I shall be firm of will, know false from true:
Each error will but show me how to do,
When next the occasion calls. I shall pursue
The path that grim experience has taught.”
This was his solace, this his saving thought.

Then came a sudden knocking at the door.
He rose—and did what he had done before:
He looked into the dark, he flinched, he
 quailed;
The occasion came, and once again he failed.

Thus wrote a man who had seen much of
 men:
“What man hath done, that will he do again.”

Yet are there souls who, having clinched
with fate,
Have learned to live, ere it was all too late.
Be it thy hope, though seven times a fool,
To get some lessons in life's fearful school.

“HE PONDERED WELL”

HE pondered well, looked in his heart,
And bravely did his part.
Then spake the Ironie Powers
That rule the prostrate hours:
“Look now on this your deed;—
Despite your heroic creed,
Your pondering and your prayers,
Behold how ill the pretty project fares!
Not hotly were you driven;
For thought and thought the days were
seven;
All was wisdom, all was cool,—
And now one name you to yourself have
given:
'T is fool, fool, fool, and only fool!”

Hast thou kept honor, and sweet courtesy
kept,
Then is no loss that may be wailed or
wept.

“THOU THINKEST THOU
HAST LIVED”

THOU thinkest thou hast lived
If fortune fair hath touched thee with its
 wand,
If thou hast known, but once, the top of life
In giving royally, in truly loving,
In braving some great deed in sight of men,
Or issuing victorious from strife.
Not so; nor hast of life the flower and height
In suffering that others may go free.
For thee the sequent years still proudly hold
A keener sense of the deep life that is,
When thou, brave novice, shalt endure the
 lore
Of fate's immeasurable ironies.

Thou may'st behold the scorn of thee and
thine

Sit on the laureled brow of him thy hand
Helped to that heaven; yes, thou may'st see
Success, in them thou gavest strength to rise,
Used for thine own disfigurement and loss;
May'st know betrayal and forgetfulness,
And knowing shalt thy spirit hold in calm;
Pitying the arrogant, the meanly vain,
Unbitterly, and with no cloying hate,
Disdain, nor envy; comforted and blest
With the high thought of knowledge, worthily
gained,
And the humility which makes men wise,
And the uncensured pride of purity.

THE GOOD MAN

WHAT do you know of me, my gentlest one!
You who have watched my life from day to
day
Through half a lifetime! Who have seen, in-
deed,
My comings and my goings; my dull years
In sunshine and in shade; in getting bread;
Gathering a little gold, a little fame,
A thousand nothings. What, I say, know you
Of my deep, inward, real, wonderful life?
My wild emprises, foolishnesses, fears,
Failures, and shames, and all but acted crimes;
My half-mad waking dreams, oh, yes, stark
mad;
My spiritual comedies, my glooms,—
Unutterable, intense, and without hope;

My secret, true, and unpraised heroisms;
 My tragedies,—played on the bare soul’s stage,
 With no eye witnessing but mine, alone,—
 Great God! not thine, I pray, not thine, not
 thine!

“SO FIERCE THE BUFFETS ”

So fierce the buffets of untimely fate
 He bowed his youthful head in mortal pain,
 And cried: “Alas, my happy life is slain!”
 Then came true sorrow, and he knew, too late,
 His early woe was but a feather’s weight.

TWO HEROES

I

TWO heroes do the world's insistent work:
One rushes in the battle's blood and murk,
 And, knowing the foeman flies,
 In one rich moment dies.

II

The other, on a path he long has feared,
By bugle blast and drum-beat all uncheered,
 At duty's chill behest
 Gives life to want and waste.

III

For him, the battle hero, high we pile
The sculptured stone; his ringing name, the
 while,
 In praises and in songs
 Its lyric life prolongs.

IV

For the other, we fashion a heaven of late
reward;

His life, all dark, and desolate, and hard,
Down to oblivion goes,—
Unless some great God knows!

THE WORLD'S END

ONCE wandering far in Asia, lo, we came
 Unto a valley falling toward the east;
 Naked its sides as if a spreading flame
 Had swept all bare; devouring, in mad
 feast,
Forest and herb, all beasts and singing choirs.
 With ardent colors were the vast hills
 strewn,
 Glowing like unquenched embers of great
 fires;
 Then sank the red sun, rose immense the
 moon.
So builded were those walls, so leaned the
 earth,—
 With slow, unnatural, and awful trend,—
 It seemed, at last, in this strange land of
 dearth,
 Even just beyond, the solid world had
 end,—
And, moving on, our vision might take flight
Into that pit whence issue day and night.

SHELLEY'S "OZYMANDIAS"

THIS timeless river—oldest of all time—
These desolate mountains, deserts stretching
 vast ;

These pyramids and temples; this domain
Of tombs; and empty shadows of the dead,
And mockery of old fame, here day and night
I wander—not alone—nor with sad heart:
One line of Shelley singing in my soul.

LA SALLE

EXPLORER OF THE MISSISSIPPI

BATTLING through trackless lands, 'gainst
savage foes;

Striving, enduring, knowing the bitterness
Of foul betrayal, still in front he goes;
Onward through swamp and forest see him
press,

Proud, silent, suffering, misunderstood;
The weight he bore, it seemed that no man
could;

Then at the last, when the infernal stroke
Fell, 't was as if the silent leader spoke:

“This river I first traced to the far sea—
If monument I need, this let it be;
Then shall I live with the chief sons of time.
This is the path of empire: onward to empire
climb!”

INAUGURATION DAY

I

ON this great day a child of time and fate
On a new path of power doth stand and wait.

II

Though heavy-burdened shall his heart re-
 joice,
Dowered with a nation's faith, an empire's
 choice.

III

Who hath no strength, but that the people
 give,
And in their wills, alone, his will doth live.

IV

On this one day, this, this, is their one man,—
The well-beloved, the chief American!

V

Whose people are his brothers, fathers, sons:
In this his strength, and not a million guns.

VI

Whose power is mightier than the mightiest
crown,
Because that soon he lays that power down.

VII

Whose wish, linked to the people's, shall ex-
ceed
The force of civic wrong and banded greed.

VIII

Whose voice, in friendship or in warning
heard,
Brings to the nations a free people's word;

IX

And, where the oppressed out from the dark-
ness grope,
'T is as the voice of freedom and of hope.

X

O pray that he may rightly rule the State,
And grow, in truly serving, truly great.

THE WASHINGTON MONUMENT

AT WASHINGTON, D. C.

STRAIGHT soars to heaven the white magnifi-
cence,—
Free as man's thought, high as one lonely
name;—
True image of his soul,—serene, immense,—
Mightiest of monuments and mightiest
fame.

BUILDERS OF THE STATE

I

WHO builds the state? Not he whose power
Rooted in wrong, in gold intrenched,
Makes him the regent of the hour;
The eternal light can not be quenched:

II

This shall outlive his little span;
Shine fierce upon each tainted scheme;
Shall show where shame blots all the plan;
The treachery in the dazzling dream.

III

He builds the state who builds on truth,—
Not he who, crushing toward his aim,
Strikes conscience from the throne, and ruth,
To win a dark unpiteous fame.

IV

Not he, though master among men,—
Empire and ages all his thought,—
Though like an eagle be his ken:
Down to the ground shall all be brought.

V

For this I hold, and shall for aye,—
Till Heaven sends death,—that they who
sow
Hate, and the blood of brothers, they
Shall harvest hate and want and woe,—

VI

The curse of Earth's dread agonies
Whereto they added, in their hour,
And all the unheeded tears and cries
They caused in lust of lawless power.

VII

He builds the state who to that task
Brings strong, clean hands, and purpose
pure;
Who wears not virtue as a mask;
He builds the state that shall endure,—

VIII

The state wherein each loyal son
Holds as a birthright from true sires
Treasures of honor, nobly won,
And freedom's never-dying fires.

IMPROMPTUS



TO WILLIAM WATSON

ON HIS CORONATION ODE

(These lines were first published on the day the King was to have
been crowned.)

IN this high ode with its great shadow-kings,
More real than real things;
In this proud pageant of imperial verse
That nobly doth rehearse
England's true glories, for the world to read,
The King is crowned indeed!

“LIFE IS THE HAMMER”

(SIDNEY LANIER)

I

LIFE is the hammer that strikes
From the bell of the poet's heart
Art.

II

And whether he lives or dies
The music in widening rings
Sings.

“THE CRITIC SCANNED THE POET’S BOOK ”

THE critic scanned the poet’s book
And ranged it calmly in its place;—
A soul that felt its music shook
As if a bolt struck down through space;
And in that soul, like flower from seed,
The music turned to lofty deed
That sanctified a race.

“HER DELICATE FORM ”

HER delicate form, her night of hair,
Took me, unaware.
They called her *poet*, and the word
Strangely I heard;
For that I thought: Can she
A poem write, and be?

FRANCESCA MIA

NO verses I can bring her,
No song that I can sing her,
Can be so sweet, by half,
As the music of her laugh,
As the murmur of her voice,
As the sound of her violin.
These make my heart rejoice,
These me to heaven can win.
But something in her face,—
Sad, wild, and full of grace,—
A look in those dark eyes
That dream, and flash, and dance,
And with soft shadows fill,—
These bring one long-loved glance,
Tender, and deep, and wise,—
Then doth my heart stand still.

AGE, AND THE SCORNER

AS I hobble, old and halt,
Daily—nightly—
By you,—hectoring on the corner,—
I know you for a graybeard scornee,

Though you raise your hat politely:—
 I know you hold it for a fault
 That I bend with burdening years,
 Dull of eye, and dull of ears;
 That this poll
 Whitens like a flax-wigged doll.
 'T is a fault, you think; but wait!
 Something marches, men call Fate;
 If you, boy! succeed in keeping
 Safe from sweep of Old Time's reaping
 You 'll be the bent-back one that hobbles
 Over the cobbles—
 Wondering why, all young at heart,
 With the old you 're pushed apart.

TO JACOB A. RIIS

ON HIS SILVER WEDDING

WERE true hearts bells, all breezes would be
 bringing,
 Straight to your heart to-day, a silver ringing
 From those you 've blest, the heavy hearts
 and sore;—
 Hark the sweet sound from here to Elsinore!

MUSIC AND FRIENDSHIP

THRICE is sweet music sweet when every word
And lovely tone by kindred hearts are heard;
So when I hear true music, Heaven send,
To share that heavenly joy, one dear, dear
friend!

FRIENDSHIP

TO —

I

FROM the happy first time
That we met—and wondered,
I from thee and thou from me
Ne'er in soul were sundered.

II

No regret, no blaming;
Absence has not shaken:
Far apart, still close in heart;
Undoubting, unforsaken.

III

As the circle narrows
 We draw near and nearer;
 So, old friend! as comes the end
 Thou art dearer, dearer.

To E. C. S.

ON HIS SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY

HIS life was generous as his life was long,—
 Filled to the brim with friendship and with
 song.

“TELL ME GOOD-BY ”

I

DARK Southern girl—the dream-like day has
 past,
 The harbor light burns red against the sky;
 In the high blue, star follows star full fast;
 The ship that takes me northward loometh
 nigh;
 “Tell me good-by!”

II

Good-by to the red rose that is your mouth,
The tender violets that are your sigh;
The sweetness that you are,—that is my
South,—

Ah, not too soon, Enchantress, do I fly!—
“Tell me good-by.”

III

“Tell me good-by,” but not too sweetly tell
Lest all too hard the going,—lest I cry
“Never, no never!” though the parting bell
Ring madly in the night;—not then could I
Tell *you* good-by.

FAREWELL TO CHARLESTON

ENCHANTED city, O farewell, farewell!
If farewell it can be
When here, 'twixt the dark pines and sunrise sea,
Our hearts remain,
While fare our bodies to the North again!
Here stay our hearts amid these mansions
stately,
These oaks, forever green, that guard sedately

The living and the dead—
 Thrilled through with song that hath interpreted
 The beauty and the gladness of the day.
 Oh, yes, our hearts remain; they must forever
 stay
 'Midst happy gardens, unforgettable,
 And where St. Michael's chimes
 The fragrant hours exquisitely tell,
 Making the world one loveliness, like a true
 poet's rhymes.

“THE PINES”

THESE are the sounds that I heard at the
 home in “The Pines”—
 The frightened cry of the yellowthroat hid in
 the trees;
 The chipmunk's rustling tread on the autumn
 leaves
 That fringe with brown the green of the wave
 and the wood;
 The purr of the quick canoe where it curves
 the wave

And the liquid push of the oar;—the voice of
the wind
Now far, now near, as it sighs through the
swaying boughs,—
Through the boughs that sway with a slow
and wave-like motion
Like growths of the sea that swing in the
moving waters;—
The voice of the wind I heard, now near, now
far;—
Voice of the grieving world that murmurs
and calls
And wakes in the spirit of man an answering
cry.

“NOT WREATHS ALONE”

NOT wreaths alone, for him who wins the
fight
’Twixt public Wrong and Right;—
The heavy burden of the people’s cares
The civic conqueror bears.
So to the chief, on this victorious night,
Pledge hands and hearts and heaven-climbing
prayers.

FOR THE CITY CLUB

IN Love of City here we take our stand:—
 Love of the City is no narrow love;
 Who loves it not he cannot love his land
 With love that shall protect, exalt, endure.
 Here are our homes, our hearts; great God
 above!
 The City *shall* be noble, *shall* be pure.

TO C. H. RUSSELL

WHOSE FATHER WAS ONE OF LINCOLN'S HELPERS

I GIVE this token to the son of him
 That was a type of those brave, prescient souls
 Who when dire trouble fell upon the land
 From the beginning saw the fateful end,
 Bending strong backs to the tremendous
 strain.

Higher than knighthood's honor lives your
 line
 For that the mighty Lincoln hurriedly called
 To your true sire, in a perilous hour,
 And got true answer—succor swift, complete.

On such as he the patient President,
The tender elder brother of us all,
The sad, wise leader leaned, and not in vain.
Therefore the nation lives—therefore shall live,
Inheriting the spirit of great days.

“GIVE THY DAY TO DUTY”

GIVE thy day to Duty!
To that high thought be given
Thine every hour.
So shall the bending heaven,—
As from the root the flower,—
Bring to thy glad soul Beauty.

TWO OPTIMISTS

(A LETTER TO JOSEPH JEFFERSON, ACKNOWLEDGING A
COPY OF HELEN KELLER'S ESSAY ON “OPTIMISM”)

To send fit thanks, I would I had the art,
For this small book that holds a mighty heart
Enshrining, as it does, brave Helen's creed.

In thought and word; in many a lovely deed;

In facing what would crush a lesser soul,
 Making of barriers helps to reach the goal;
 In sympathy with all; in human kindness
 To the blind of heart (dear girl! not this *her*
 blindness!),

As well as to her brethren of the dark
 And silent world, who through her see and
 hark;

In bringing out of darkness a great light,
 Which burns and beacons high in all men's
 sight,

That exquisite spirit is true optimist!

Yet there are other names in the bright list:
 If faith in man and woman that still lasts,
 Though chilled by seventy winters' bitter
 blasts;

If seeing, as you see, the good in evil,
 And even something Christian in the devil;
 If power to take misfortune as a friend
 And to be cheerful to the darkening end;
 Not to be spoiled by praise, nor deeply stung
 By the detractor's sharp and envious tongue;
 If living in fairy-land as really now
 As when heaven's dew was fresh on child-
 hood's brow;

If seeing, in fine, this world as through a prism
Of lovely colors be true optimism,
Then Jefferson is true optimist no less,
And Heaven sent both this troubled world to
 bless.

THE PASSING OF JOSEPH JEFFERSON

SOME element from nature seems withdrawn,
The world we lived in being of his spirit
wrought,—

His brightness, sweetness, tender gaiety,
His childlike, wistful, and half-humorous faith
That turned this harsh earth into fairy-land.
He made our world, and now our world is
changed.

The sunniest nature his that ever breathed;
Most lovable of all the sons of men;
Who built his joy on making others happy;
Like Jesus, lover of the hills and shores,
And like him to the beasts and flowers kin,
And with a brother's love for all mankind,
But chiefly for the loving—though the lost.
In his own art,—ineffable, serene,

And mystical (not less to nature true
 And to the heart of man),—his was the power
 To shed a light of love on human waifs
 And folk of simple soul. Where'er he went,
 Sweet childhood followed and all childlike
 hearts.

His very presence made a holiday—
 Affectionate laughter and quick, unsad tears.

Now, he being gone, the sun shines not so
 bright
 And every shadow darkens.

Kind Heaven forbid
 Our lives should lack forever what he gave,—
 Prove mirage-haunted, every good unreal!
 Let the brave cheer of life we had through him
 Return, reflected from his joyous soul
 That cannot all be lost, where'er it hides,—
 Hides, but is quenched not,—haply smiling still
 Near where his well-loved Shakspeare smiling
 sits,
 Whose birthday for his own new birth he took
 Into the unseen world, to him not far
 But radiant with the same mysterious light

That filled his noontime with the twilight
dream.

And it was Easter, too,—the golden day
Of resurrection, and man's dauntless hope.

Into the unseen he passed, willing and glad,
And humbly proud of a great nation's love;
In honored age, with heart untouched by years
Save to grow sweeter, and more dear, more
dear,—

Into that world whereon, so oft, he mused;
Where he forgets not this, nor shall we him,—
That magic smile, that most pathetic voice,
That starry glance, that rare and faithful soul.

From dream to dream he passed on Shak-
spere's day—

So dedicate his mind to pleasant thought,
So deep his fealty to that great shade;
He being, like him of Avon, a fairy child,
High-born of miracle and mystery,
Of wonder, and of wisdom, and of mirth.

“SHALL WE NOT PRAISE
THE LIVING?”

I

UNGENEROUS!

Shall we not praise the living as the dead?
And I, who lately sang a beautiful spirit fled,
Shall I not praise a living spirit we know,
Dear heart! we know full well,—
And long have known, in utmost joy and woe;
In our own sorrows, and delights;
Her days of brightness and lone-weeping
nights!

If she should die,—alas the day! how swift
this verse would tell
Our anguish, our large loss,—irreparable,—
In a wild passion of praise
For her dear virtues, her sweet friendship's
ways,

That many know; but only a sacred few
Know, as to the evening hour is known the
 dew,
As the still dawn knows the great, melting
 stars,
As night is intimate to those who love,
As sorrow's voice is known to the mourning
 dove,
As memoried twilight holds the sunset's
 crimson bars.

II

Shall we not praise the loveliness
God gave her, and the true heart that cannot
 help but bless?
For she is not of those
Who virtues wear like graceful draperies,—
But breathes them as her life. Where'er she
 goes
Go pleasure and pure thoughts,—and base-
 ness dies.
A holy ministry her life is—even without
 intent;
For, though she worships duty,

74 "SHALL WE NOT PRAISE THE LIVING?"

Such elements in her are exquisitely blent
She cannot but be kind;
A spiritual radiance in her beauty
Makes itself inly felt, even by the blind.

Ah, thou and I,—dear soul! we know
How the rich courtesy that touched full many
 a heart
Is no mere learnt and gracious art;
For when, to those she loved, keen trouble
 came,
How leaped her spirit, like a flame;
How quick, sure, self-forgetting, beyond
 thought,
The angelic succor that brave spirit brought!

III

How may I fitly name them all—
The graces, gentlenesses, benedictions,
That in a white processional
Move before these musing eyes;
Nor would I shame
That proud humility which is the crown and
 chief

Of all the virtues that make up her golden
sheaf;

Though should I name each separate good-
ness, clearly, that is her very own,
To her calm eyes, alone,
The authentic picture would be never
known,—

The portrait of another it would seem;
And should one say, “This, this indeed is you!”
“No,” she would cry, “’t is but a poet’s dream,
And, save as a dream, it cannot all be true!”

IV

This then the dream: Large, innocent eyes,
Lit with life’s romance and surprise,
And with a child’s strange wisdom wise.

A child in nature, eager, gay,
And, yet, in all a woman’s way
Wifely and motherly her day.

Curious, but constant; slow to wrath,
Yet nobly scornful; pride she hath
That sheds a splendor on her path.

She breathes a heaven-born sympathy;

76 "SHALL WE NOT PRAISE THE LIVING?"

For her there is no low nor high;
Goodness is honor in her eye:

So, in the throng, each separate one
Deems her glad welcome his alone,
As if some special grace were shown.

The great world, seeing her afar,
Claims her, and names her for a star;
But, among nearer watchers, are

Some who a sacred tale could tell
How those bright beams, ineffable,
On one great hero-spirit fell.

V

Shall we not praise the living?
Too soon the living pass
Like images on the unremembering glass,
Scarce even a breath's length! shall we not
thanksgiving

Upraise, or e'er the everlasting sleep
Hath dulled the ear?—that slumber deep
Whereof we know so little, however we may
hope,—

Mortals who see a closing door, and never see
it ope.

HYMN

WRITTEN FOR THE SERVICE IN MEMORY OF DR. J. L. M.
CURRY, HELD BY THE SOUTHERN EDUCATION CON-
FERENCE, RICHMOND, VIRGINIA, APRIL 26, 1903

I

GOD of the strong, God of the weak,
Lord of all lands, and our own land;
Light of all souls, from thee we seek
Light from thy light, strength from
thy hand.

II

In suffering thou hast made us one,
In mighty burdens one are we;
Teach us that lowliest duty done
Is highest service unto thee.

III

Teach us, Great Teacher of mankind,
The sacrifice that brings thy balm;
The love, the work that bless and bind;
Teach us thy majesty, thy calm.

IV

Teach thou, and we shall know, indeed,
The truth divine that maketh free;
And knowing, we may sow the seed
That blossoms through eternity;—

V

May sow in every living heart
That to the waiting day doth ope.
Not ours, O God! the craven part,
To shut one human soul from hope.

VI

Now, in the memory of thy Saint,
To whom thy little ones were dear,
Help us to toil and not to faint,
Till earth grows dark and heaven
comes near.

JOHN WESLEY

WRITTEN FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE TWO-HUN-
DREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF
JOHN WESLEY, AT WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY,
MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT, JUNE, 1903

I

IN those clear, piercing, piteous eyes behold
The very soul that over England flamed!
Deep, pure, intense; consuming shame and ill;
Convicting men of sin; making faith live;
And,—this the mightiest miracle of all,—
Creating God again in human hearts.

What courage of the flesh and of the spirit!
How grim of wit, when wit alone might serve!
What wisdom his to know the boundless
 might
Of banded effort in a world like ours!

How meek, how self-forgetful, courteous,
calm!—

A silent figure when men idly raged
In murderous anger; calm, too, in the storm,—
Storm of the spirit, strangely imminent,
When spiritual lightnings struck men down
And brought, by violence, the sense of sin,
And violently oped the gates of peace.

O hear that voice, which rang from dawn
to night,
In church and abbey whose most ancient walls
Not for a thousand years such accents knew!
On windy hilltops; by the roaring sea;
'Mid tombs, in market-places, prisons, fields;
'Mid clamor, vile attack,—or deep-awed hush,
Wherein celestial visitants drew near
And secret ministered to troubled souls!

Hear ye, O hear! that ceaseless-pleading
voice,
Which storm, nor suffering, nor age could
still—
Chief prophet-voice through nigh a century's
span!

Now silvery as Zion's dove that mourns,
Now quelling as the Archangel's judgment-
trump,
And ever with a sound like that of old
Which, in the desert, shook the wandering
tribes,
Or, round about storied Jerusalem,
Or by Gennesaret, or Jordan, spake
The words of life.

Let not that image fade
Ever, O God! from out the minds of men,
Of him thy messenger and stainless priest,
In a brute, sodden, and unfaithful time,
Early and late, o'er land and sea, on-driven;
In youth, in eager manhood, age extreme,—
Driven on forever, back and forth the world,
By that divine, omnipotent desire—
The hunger and the passion for men's souls!

Ah, how he loved Christ's poor! No narrow
thought
Dishumaned any soul from his emprise;
But his the prayer sincere that Heaven might
send

Him chiefly to the humble; he would be,
Even as the Galilean, dedicate
Unto the ministry of lowliness:
That boon did Heaven mercifully grant;
And gladly was he heard; and rich the fruit;
While still the harvest ripens round the earth;
And many own the name once given in scorn;
And all revere the holy life he led,
Praise what he did for England, and the
 world,
And call that greatness which was once re-
 proach.
Would we were worthy for his praise.

Dear God!

Thy servant never knew one selfish hour!
How are we shamed, who look upon a world
Ages afar from that true kingdom preached
Millenniums ago in Palestine!

Send us, again, O Spirit of all Truth!
High messengers of dauntless faith and power
Like him whose memory this day we praise,
We cherish and we praise with burning hearts.
Let kindle, as before, from his bright torch,
Myriads of messengers aflame with thee
To darkest places bearing light divine!

II

As did one soul, whom here I fain would sing,
For here in youth his gentle spirit took
New fire from Wesley's glow.

How oft have I,
A little child, harkened my father's voice
Preaching the Word in country homes remote,
Or wayside schools, where only two or three
Were gathered. Lo, again that voice I hear,
Like Wesley's, raised in those sweet, fervent
hymns
Made sacred by how many saints of God
Who breathed their souls out on the well-
loved tones.

Again I see those circling, eager faces;
I hear once more the solemn-urging words
That tell the things of God in simple phrase;
Again the deep-voiced, reverent prayer
ascends,
Bringing to the still summer afternoon
A sense of the eternal. As he preached
He lived; unselfish, famelessly heroic.
For even in mid-career, with life still full,
His was the glorious privilege and choice

Deliberately to give that life away
In succor of the suffering; for he knew
No rule but duty, no reward but Christ.

III

Increase thy prophets, Lord! give strength
to smite
Shame to the heart of luxury and sloth!
Give them the yearning after human souls
That burned in Wesley's breast! Through
them, great God!
Teach poverty it may be rich in thee;
Teach riches the true wealth of thine own
spirit.
To our loved land, Celestial Purity!
Bring back the meaning of those ancient
words,—
Not lost but soiled, and darkly disesteemed,—
The ever sacred names of husband, wife,
And the great name of Love,—whereon is
built
The temple of human happiness and hope!
Baptize with holy wrath thy prophets, Lord!
By them purge from us this corruption foul

That seizes on our civic governments,
Crowns the corrupter in the sight of men,
And makes him maker of laws, and honor's
source!

Help us, in memory of the sainted dead,
Help us, O Heaven! to frame a nobler state,
In nobler lives rededicate to thee:—
Symbol and part of the large brotherhood
Of man and nations; one in one great love,
True love of God, which is the love of man,
In sacrifice and mutual service shown.

Let kindle, as before, O Heavenly Light!
New messengers of righteousness, and hope,
And courage, for our day! So shall the world
That ever, surely, climbs to thy desire
Grow swifter toward thy purpose and intent.

A TEMPLE OF ART

WRITTEN FOR THE OPENING OF THE ALBRIGHT ART
GALLERY, BUFFALO, MAY 31, 1905

I

SLOWLY to the day the rose,
The moon-flower suddenly to the night,
Their mysteries of light
In innocence uncloze.

II

In this garden of delight,
This pillared temple, pure and white,
We plant the seed of art,
With mystic power
To bring, or sudden or slow, the perfect flower,
That cheers and comforts the sad human heart;
That brings to man high thought
From starry regions caught,

And sweet, unconscious nobleness of deed;
So he may never lose his childhood's joyful
 creed,
While years and sorrows to sorrows and
 years succeed.

III

Though thick the cloud that hides the unseen
 life
Before we were and after we shall be,
Here in this fragment of eternity;
And heavy is the burden and the strife—
The universe, we know, in beauty had its birth;
The day in beauty dawns, in beauty dies,
With intense color of the sea and skies;
And life, for all its rapine, with beauty floods
 the earth.
Lovely the birds, and their true song,
Amid the murmurous leaves, the summer long.
Whate'er the baffling power
Sent anger and earthquake and a thousand ills,—
It made the violet flower,
And the wide world with breathless beauty
 thrills.

IV

Who built the world made man
With power to build and plan,
A soul all loveliness to love,—
Blossom below and lucent blue above,—
And new unending beauty to contrive.
He, the creature, may not make
Beautiful beings all alive,—
Iris'd moth nor mottled snake,
The lily's splendor,
The light of glances infinitely tender,
Nor the day's dying glow nor flush of morn,—
And yet his handiwork the angels shall not
scorn,
When he hath wrought in truth and by
Heaven's law,
In lowliness and awe.
Bravely shall he labor, while from his pure
hands
Spring fresh wonders, spread new lands;
Son of God, no longer child of fate,
Like God he shall create.

V

When, weary ages hence, this wrong world is
set right;

When brotherhood is real

And all that justice can for man is done;

When the fair, fleeing, anguished-for ideal

Turns actual at last; and 'neath the sun

Man hath no human foe;

And even the brazen sky, and storms that
blow,

And all the elements have friendlier proved,—

By human wit to human uses moved,—

Ah, still shall art endure,

And beauty's light and lure,

To keep man noble, and make life delight,

Though shadows backward fall from the
engulfing night.

VI

In a world of little aims,

Sordid hopes and futile fames,

Spirit of Beauty! high thy place

In the fashioning of the race.

In this temple, built to thee,
We thy worshipers would be,
Lifting up, all undefiled,
Hearts as lowly as a child;
Humble to be taught and led
And on celestial manna fed;
So to take into our lives
Something that from heaven derives.

THE WHITE TSAR'S PEOPLE¹

PART I

THE White Tsar's people cry:

“Thou God of the heat and the cold,
Of storm and of lightning,
Of darkness, and dawn's red brightening;
Hold, Lord God, hold,
Hold thy hand lest we curse thee and die.”

The White Tsar's people pray:

“Thou God of the South and the North,
We are crushed, we are bleeding;
'T is Christ, 't is thy Son interceding;
Forth, Lord, come forth!
Bid the slayer no longer slay.”

¹ Parts I and II are here reprinted from “Five Books of Song.”

The White Tsar's people call
Aloud to the skies of lead:
"We are slaves, not freemen:
Ourselves, our children, our women—
Dead, we are dead,
Though we breathe, we are dead men all.

"Blame not if we misprize thee
Who can, but will not draw near.
'T is thou who hast made us—
Not thou, dread God, to upbraid us.
Hear, Lord God, hear!
Lest we whom thou madest despise thee."

PART II

Then answered the most high God,
Lord of the heat and the cold,
Of storm and of lightning,
Of darkness, and dawn's red brightening:
"Bold, yea, too bold,
Whom I wrought from the air and the clod!
"Hast thou forgotten from me
Are those ears so quick to hear

The passion and anguish
Of your sisters, your children who languish
Near? Ah, not near—
Far off by the uttermost sea!

“Who gave ye your brains to plan—
Your hearts to suffer and bleed?
Why call ye on Heaven—
'T is the earth that to you is given!
Plead, ye may plead,
But for man I work through man.

“Who gave ye a voice to utter
Your tale to the wind and the sea?
One word well spoken
And the iron gates are broken!
From me, yea, from me
The word that ye will not mutter.

“I love not murder but ruth.
Begone from my sight ye who take
The knife of the coward—
Even ye who by Heaven were dowered!
Wake ye, O wake,
And strike with the sword of Truth!

“Fear ye lest I misprize ye—

I who fashioned not brutes, but men.

After the lightning

And darkness—the dawn’s red brightening!

Men! Be ye men!

Lest I who made ye despise ye!”

PART III

(January 22, 1905)

The great word is uttered, at last!

White Tsar! O where hast thou fled?

Thy children, heart-broken,

To thee their sorrows have spoken!

To thee it is said—

That WORD on the wings of the blast!

For the word is their fearful cry,

And the word is their innocent blood.

O red is the chalice

Lifted up to thy empty palace!

Blood, crimson blood,

On the snows where the murdered lie!

Their shed blood is the word! It is winning
Its way swift from zone unto zone;
Through the world it has thrilled
And the heart of the nations stilled.

Alone, thou alone!
Art thou deaf to the voice and the meaning?

Lo, it swells like the sound of the sea.

Dull monarch! yet, yet, shalt thou hear it!
For, once 'neath the sun
By the brave it is spoken—all 's done!

Hear it—and fear it;
For “Freedom ” it cries, “We are free!”

